

# Investin

The Corporate Magazine of Invest Northern Ireland

Issue 16 February 2009

Invest  
Northern  
Ireland

Building Locally  
Competing Globally



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# Innovator? Exporter?

Invest NI Innovation & Export Awards 2009

**Shortlist announced**



Find out what Invest NI can do for your business at [www.investni.com](http://www.investni.com)

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Competing Globally

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# Resilience and innovation



Leslie Morrison  
Chief Executive

**If 2008 is remembered as the beginning of the worst economic downturn in 30 years, we must hope that 2009 will be remembered for the resilience, innovation and energy with which many in the business world are meeting the mounting pressures.**

To help businesses negotiate these challenges, Invest NI has instigated a range of support measures. Highlighted in this issue is the series of credit crunch seminars which over 500 companies have attended to date.

Sadly, not all businesses will survive the downturn, but those that do will be stronger, leaner and more alert to the global nature of the economy.

In this issue we provide many examples of companies that, despite the economic challenges, are continuing to invest and to innovate and are being rewarded with growing sales. Among these are the 18 companies shortlisted for our first Innovation & Export Awards. Across the full spectrum of activity, from cutting-edge biometric technology, to health foods, to detection dogs, these companies are demonstrating a common approach based on excellence, innovation and a keen awareness of their customers' needs.

These companies demonstrate the essential role that research and development, in its widest sense, plays in business success. To make it easier for companies to access such support we've recently launched the Grant for R&D, which is a single, streamlined programme replacing Invest NI's previous programmes for R&D support. Details of the new scheme and how to apply are given in this issue.

We also begin a new series of articles profiling the work of our overseas offices and their achievements in helping local companies break into new markets.

Please note that the insert included with this issue provides information on the forthcoming Belfast Telegraph Business Awards. Invest NI is sponsoring two categories and I would be delighted to see some Invest NI clients among the winning entries.

Finally, this is my final contribution, as Chief Executive, to Invest NI's corporate magazine. The magazine's success reflects the same hard work and talent that I have encountered within the whole organisation during my seven years of tenure. I would like to congratulate and thank the editors and production staff as I do all Invest NI alumni, past and present.

# NEWS

## Celebrating excellence

Invest NI is sponsoring two of the award categories in this year's Belfast Telegraph Business Awards. The awards recognise and celebrate the success of local companies and entrepreneurs across the business spectrum.

The two Invest NI-sponsored awards are Excellence in Innovation for Business Improvement and Business Team of the Year. Both are closely aligned to the core themes contained in the Programme for Government and in Invest NI's Corporate Plan, which focuses on increasing business productivity to create greater wealth.

Launching the awards in January the Economy Minister Arlene Foster said: "Despite the difficult current economic conditions, we continue to have many companies, locally and internationally owned, that are investing and succeeding.

"The Belfast Telegraph Business Awards provide an excellent opportunity to recognise, reward and celebrate that success across all aspects of business excellence in Northern Ireland."

The main sponsor of the Awards is BMI, which this year is celebrating 25 years of operation in Northern Ireland.

The Awards will be held on 2 April at the Ramada Hotel, Belfast.



>> Pictured with Minister Foster are (from left) Mary Gormley, Manager of Invest NI's Western Regional Office, Steve Chambers, Head of Invest NI's Property Solutions Unit and Councillor The Lord Morrow of Clougher Valley MLA

## New business park for Dungannon

**Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster has announced a £2.4 million infrastructure project at a new Invest NI business park in Dungannon.**

The project will develop the road and utilities infrastructure and release an additional 26 acres of useable land to accommodate the future growth and investment plans of Invest NI client companies.

Announcing the investment, the Minister said: "Whilst the global slowdown continues to impact on our local economy, it is important that we plan for the longer term by ensuring that sufficient land, with the necessary

infrastructure, is in place to support new investment opportunities as they arise.

"Invest NI has a limited portfolio of land and property options available across Northern Ireland. With all of its industrial land at Granville in Dungannon already allocated, this investment will support and encourage new investment projects by providing the type of flexible property solutions which can be fundamental to investor decisions."

Work is expected to be completed in December 2010, with land available for sale from early 2011.

## £3.5 million expansion by Singularity

**Leading business process software innovator Singularity is investing over £3.5 million to expand its operations and create 62 jobs in Londonderry and Belfast. The project is being supported by Invest NI and the European Regional Development Fund.**

The investment aims to accelerate Singularity's growth in the rapidly expanding Business Process Management market. The company is planning to develop new products for this market and to expand its presence in the telecoms, capital markets and government market sectors in the UK, US and Far East.

Singularity has offices in Londonderry, Belfast, London, New York, Singapore and Hyderabad in India. The new jobs will bring the total Northern Ireland staff to 161 and staff numbers worldwide to over 300.

Padraig Canavan, Singularity's Managing Director, says: "We compete at the highest levels internationally and consistently win. That is based on hiring the best people and continuously focusing on what our customers want. We have achieved a lot, but we have even greater ambitions for the future."

## New Chief Executive to take the helm



Alastair Hamilton is to succeed Leslie Morrison as Chief Executive of Invest NI, taking up his post on 1 April 2009.

Mr Hamilton, (43) who is from Northern Ireland, has over 25

years' experience in the public and private sectors, most recently with BT in the UK. He also previously held the post of Economic and Business Advisor with OFMDFM.

Invest NI Chairman, Stephen Kingon says: "Alastair Hamilton has a wealth of business experience coupled with

strong leadership skills that will help drive Invest NI forward as it delivers against the challenging targets outlined in its third corporate plan.

"Alastair's excellent capability in strategic development and building client relationships will be of great significance as Invest NI continues to support the growth plans of local companies and attract new inward investment, despite the difficulties presented by the current global business climate."

Mr Hamilton was born and brought up in Ballymena. Educated at Cambridge House Grammar school, he joined BT as an apprentice engineer. He is married with four children and lives in Kells. In his spare time he is a keen motorsport enthusiast.

# NEWS

## Mallusk company invests over £3 million

Williams Industrial Services (WIS) has invested £3.3 million to develop new products and increase its focus on export markets.

WIS is Northern Ireland's largest provider of process control and environmental engineering solutions. It operates across a wide range of industry sectors from aerospace to water and waste water treatment.



The investment, supported by Invest NI, will help the company increase its turnover to £30 million over the next two years and promote 24 new high quality jobs.

Robert Adamson, Joint-Managing Director of WIS, says: "Our growth strategy over the next two years includes a variety of promotional activities. This aggressive marketing campaign will be essential to further establishing our presence in developing markets."

John Toner, Joint-Managing Director of WIS, adds: "Our planned scientific R&D function will enable us to explore new technologies, analyse innovative treatment processes and test prototype solutions that could have vast commercial potential."

Invest NI has previously helped Williams with company development initiatives including staff training and strategic planning.

>> Pictured with Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster, are (right) Robert Adamson and John Toner, Joint-Managing Directors of WIS

## Software firm invests to develop exports

Newtownabbey-based business Sensible Networks is seeking to grow its export business through a £650,000 project, supported by Invest NI. The company specialises in the provision of software products and associated consultancy services.

The company's main product enhances existing software used by IT companies, helping them to centralise information more easily from separate databases.

Ryan McKeever, Managing Director of Sensible Networks, says: "We have developed a core product that has been successfully tested, and demonstrated high functionality and reliability in the marketplace.

"The size of external markets for our offering is considerable and with Invest NI's help we are positioning ourselves to serve export markets more effectively and significantly increase our turnover and profitability.

"This investment aims to increase awareness of our IT solutions amongst potential customers throughout the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain and grow our client base in these markets."

Sensible Networks is recruiting five new operational workers as part of the investment.

# NEWS

## Landmark deal for Chieftain

Dungannon-based Chieftain Trailers has secured an export deal worth €5 million. Chieftain designs and manufactures a range of trailers, low-loaders, bowsers and forklift machinery for various sectors, including commercial, agriculture, materials handling and rail freight.

The landmark deal, the biggest in the company's 25-year history, will see Chieftain supply 100 trailers for agricultural and commercial use in eastern Europe. Invest NI has offered significant financial assistance to the company in recent years, helping it develop new products and expand into new high-tech premises.

Managing Director of Chieftain Trailers John Quinn says: "This contract represents a major step forward for Chieftain as we continue to build our export turnover. Invest NI has supported us to improve efficiency through staff training and to develop our overall capability, and it is a tribute to our dedicated and highly skilled workforce that we have secured this key business. We will use this order as a springboard for future growth."

## Global success for Omagh firm



Omagh engineering company Telestack International has secured its first orders from South America and North Africa, totalling almost £400,000. The deals mean that Telestack has achieved sales in all major continents in the last year.

During a recent visit, Invest NI Chief Executive Leslie Morrison congratulated the company: "Global trading conditions in manufacturing sectors have rarely been as challenging as they are at present but lucrative opportunities still exist for innovative firms that have a strong export focus," he said.

Malachy Gribben, Telestack's Commercial Director, says:

"Invest NI has helped us to grow our export capability by assisting us to develop products that are reliable, perform to the highest standards and are also easily shipped. This support has been complemented by export marketing assistance and participation on trade missions, which have given us greater exposure than ever to potential global customers."

>> Leslie Morrison with Telestack's Commercial Director Malachy Gribben (left) and Managing Director Adrian McCutcheon



>> Leslie Morrison with Managing Director of Chieftain Trailers John Quinn at the announcement of a €5 million export deal for the company



>> Pictured with Minister Foster is Bjarni Thorvardarson, CEO of Hibernia Atlantic, with a branching unit, which will be used to connect Northern Ireland's new direct telecommunications link to the existing transatlantic cable

## First direct telecommunications link with USA

Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster has confirmed the award of a €30 million contract to construct a new direct telecommunications link to North America.

Co-financed under the INTERREG IVA programme 2007-13, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI), in partnership with the Department of Communication, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) in the Republic of Ireland, has awarded a contract to Hibernia Atlantic Ltd, following a competitive tendering process.

Access to the new telecommunications will be available on both sides of the border, delivering direct links with the USA and improved communication connections to Europe.

Announcing the award of the contract the Minister said: "This project will deliver the kind of international telecommunications that companies located in London, Amsterdam, Dublin and New York already depend on. It will provide opportunities for Northern Ireland companies selling goods and services overseas and also improve our attractiveness to knowledge-based inward investment."

Project Kelvin will involve connecting a new submarine cable to the Hibernia North Transatlantic cable located 22 miles off the north coast. The new cable will interconnect with Northern Ireland's existing telecoms infrastructure.

## Blue sky thinking

Lisburn-based company Blue Sky Renewables is investing almost £470,000 in an expansion project, supported by Invest NI.

The company assembles, distributes and installs sustainable energy equipment such as solar panels

and water heaters to a range of industry sectors, building management organisations and homeowners.

This investment is helping the company to develop exports throughout the UK, the Republic of Ireland and mainland Europe by focusing on highly targeted marketing and business development initiatives.

# NEWS

## Trace First US success

Armagh company Trace First has secured business worth over \$620,000 with the New York State government following support from Invest NI.

Trace First develops software to facilitate livestock traceability, animal disease surveillance and emergency planning in the event of an outbreak that could contaminate the food chain. Invest NI start-up support helped the company to carry out feasibility testing and subsequently to roll out a major export marketing campaign.

Co-founder of Trace First Michael McGrath says: "Invest NI's support has been crucial in developing the business and enabling us to raise awareness of our products within our target markets.

"The deals with NY State follow extensive consideration and scrutiny by US Government procurement agencies. This required our products to meet their stringent standards of value for money, service delivery and after-sales care. We are now well positioned to attract business from other US state administrations and to target new sales in other major agricultural markets such as New Zealand, the UK and Ireland." The company received support from the Transform programme.

Credit Crunch

# Clients benefiting from **CREDIT CRUNCH** seminars

**INVEST NI'S** seven seminars, 'Challenges and Opportunities - the Credit Crunch', have been attended by over 500 clients, the vast majority of which have gone on to seek further support.

The seminars featured specialist advisors who provided practical advice for firms, highlighting ways to improve efficiencies in a range of areas such as internal operations, financial administration and supply chain management. One-to-one guidance on how best to reduce or remove barriers to securing new sales in export markets was also available.

Participants at the events had the opportunity to discuss their individual business needs in detail and identify key projects to improve performance. Many went on to benefit from five days of free specialist consultancy support from Invest NI for a diagnostic investigation.

Where a suitable project up to the value of £100,000 is identified during this diagnostic and approved by Invest NI, clients can obtain 50 per cent support from Invest NI's Accelerated Support Fund.

Niall Casey, Invest NI's Director of Business Improvement Services, says: "It's vital in the current economic slowdown that local businesses take steps to continuously develop better processes and operational efficiencies to cut costs and add value. The resulting improvements in competitiveness can also significantly enhance the export potential of local companies, where the current relative weakness of sterling makes locally produced goods and services more internationally attractive."

Recognising that the current economic conditions are presenting challenges to all businesses in Northern Ireland, Invest NI is also running a series of events that are open to non-clients.

## E-MARKETING KNOW-HOW

Invest NI is running a one-day conference to show companies how they can tap into global markets through effective online marketing strategies. The conference will feature a panel of industry experts who will give an insight into the range of internet tools that can be used to reach international markets.

### The conference will feature:

>> **Keynote discussion with George Wright from American company Blendtec, which used YouTube to successfully market its range of innovative blenders, increasing sales by 700 per cent.**

>> **How to effectively use search engine marketing and pay per click with Internet Marketing Consultant, Susan Hallam. Susan has years of experience showing small and medium-sized businesses how to take advantage of the latest internet technologies. Susan is an Adwords and Google professional and an Ebay education specialist.**

>> **Email marketing, affiliate marketing and how to use social networking and new media to the advantage of your business.**

To register for this event visit [www.investni.com/registration](http://www.investni.com/registration) or call Karen Hoey at Morrow Communications on 028 9039 3837.



**MOST** of the programmes and support initiatives offered by Invest NI are wholly or partly funded by EU Structural Funds, and specifically by the Programme for Building Sustainable Prosperity (BSP). A recent report has highlighted the significant contribution that BSP made to local economic development during the 2000-06 period.

The BSP funds are intended to help reduce economic and social disparities, and to establish the conditions that will assure the long-term development of regions within the EU. In the area of economic development the funds are channelled through Invest NI.

Between 2000 and 2006 BSP funding contributed almost £149 million to over 4,900 projects supported by Invest NI. These projects ranged from business start-ups to research and development, support for tourism, and initiatives in the area of information and communication technologies.

#### **Help businesses to start and grow**

Some £11.25 million of BSP support helped establish over 1,200 new businesses – many of these export focused. Significant funds, over £57 million, were also used to help businesses grow and become more competitive by providing support for activities such as marketing, staff training, strengthening management teams, developing export skills and strategic development.

#### **Encouraging research and development**

To help strengthen the economy by boosting innovation within business, BSP funds supported a range of R&D programmes delivered by Invest NI. These included key programmes such as Compete and Start, which together received nearly £50 million of support.

**This money has been used to help businesses develop new products and processes and bring them to market. It has also supported the commercialisation of university research and the development of ground breaking industrially relevant research.**

#### **Tourism support**

BSP has also supported the growth of the local tourism industry. From 2000 to 2006 it provided £26 million of funding to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to support 38 projects aimed at marketing and enhancing Northern Ireland as a tourism destination. Financial assistance was provided to 15 projects relating to development, improvement and renovation of visitor attractions, amenities and infrastructure. The programme also provided support to 23 different marketing initiatives aimed at raising the profile of Northern Ireland as a tourism destination in overseas markets.

#### **Supporting connectivity**

Over £10 million of BSP funding was targeted at encouraging Northern Ireland companies, including entrepreneurs and business start-ups, to progress along the connectivity chain. This involves exploiting e-commerce and e-business opportunities to boost innovation, increase business confidence, build business competitiveness and address business threats. Invest NI's ICT Advisory Service and its E-solutions Centre are two initiatives that work with businesses in this area. Direct financial support for companies to help them install appropriate management information systems is another key Invest NI channel of ICT assistance.

#### **Tangible results**

Damian McAuley, Invest NI's Director of Strategic Management and Planning, says: "The support Northern Ireland has received from the EU's BSP funding has been fundamental to the region's economic growth over the last decade. The results of the funding are tangible – new jobs, new products, increased turnover, new customers in new markets and better business practices. It is essential that we recognise that without the significant level of funding that has been made available we would not easily have been able to move towards sustainable economic development."



Special Feature

# EU Funds

## support economic development

# INNOVATION

## key to growth

Key economic measures indicate that Northern Ireland business lags behind the rest of the UK, Europe and the US in terms of innovation and research and development. Damian McAuley, Invest NI's Director of Strategic Management and Planning, outlines the underlying causes.

**Innovation plays a critical role in economic growth and competitiveness and is seen by the European Commission as holding the key to reducing the 30 per cent gap in GDP per head between the EU and the US.**

A regional innovation scoreboard ranks Northern Ireland in 113th place out of 203 regions in the EU25. This is the lowest placing of the 12 UK regions. Northern Ireland's position reflects a range of factors including a lower proportion of employment in knowledge based manufacturing and services, a lower proportion

of businesses reporting innovation activity, fewer patents and lower levels of research and development expenditure.

Lower levels of innovation activity and patents may partly be explained by industrial structural issues within the Northern Ireland economy.

### RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURE

The results from the 2007 Northern Ireland Research and Development Survey show that expenditure on R&D in Northern Ireland was £351 million in 2007, of which 52.7 per cent was spent by businesses. In 2006, R&D expenditure in Northern Ireland represented 0.55 per cent of GVA, compared to 1.24 per cent in the UK as a whole. However, since 2003 R&D has grown steadily in Northern Ireland in comparison to the UK.

### SIZE MATTERS

There is much evidence to suggest that the gap in R&D expenditure between UK and Northern Ireland is directly related to scale. In 2006 over 60 per cent of UK business R&D expenditure was reported by businesses with more than 1,000 employees. In Northern Ireland the business base is heavily skewed toward small businesses and the proportion of businesses with

more than 500 employees is less than one third of that in the UK. R&D expenditure levels in Northern Ireland are therefore unlikely to achieve parity with the UK without considerable change in economic structure.

Large businesses (more than 250 employees) within Northern Ireland make a significant contribution toward R&D expenditure. Among Invest NI clients, 32 large businesses contribute 47 per cent of total business R&D expenditure, while approximately 250 small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) make up 53 per cent. The latter group has made a significant contribution to growth in R&D activity having increased expenditure by almost 12 per cent per year between 2003 and 2006, while large businesses have reported a 2 per cent annual growth in spend over the same period.

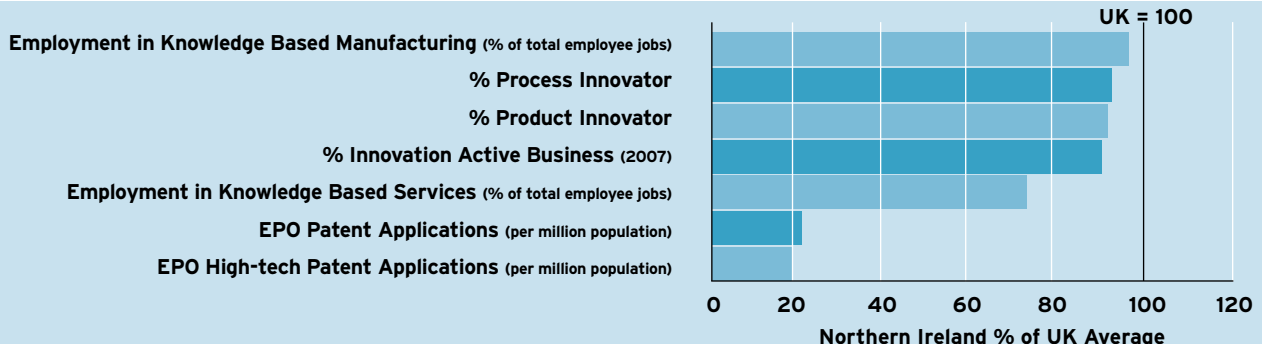
### A SECTOR PERSPECTIVE

From an industry sector perspective, there has been considerable shift in R&D activity since 2003. Annual growth in R&D spend in services averaged 13 per cent, while R&D in manufacturing increased by an average of 4 per cent per year over the same period.

### THE CHALLENGE

The Invest NI Corporate Plan aims to increase R&D by an average of 8 per cent in SMEs and 5 per cent in large businesses from 2008-11. Given the difficult economic circumstances which businesses will face over the next three years it is a tough challenge, but Invest NI will continue to make supporting innovation a priority.

Key Innovation Metrics: NI Performance against UK Average





>> Pictured with the Economy Minister are Tracy Meharg of Invest NI and Iain Hogg, Joint Managing Director of Macrete with a model of the company's Flexi-Arch bridge, developed with Invest NI R&D support

# R&D

## support made easy

Research & Development

Invest NI has launched a new programme that will make it easier for companies to access support for research and development.

Launched in December, the Grant for R&D, which is part funded by the European Regional Development Programme, is a single, streamlined programme combining financial support with practical advice from Innovation Advisors. It replaces Invest NI's previous portfolio of R&D support which was split over several programmes and initiatives.

One of Invest NI's policy objectives is to get more firms involved in R&D, to increase the amount of R&D that existing performers are doing and to raise the quality and sophistication of R&D.

By making support easier to access, it is hoped that the new programme

will contribute to achieving this objective. Invest NI has allocated £50 million to the Grant for R&D for the three-year period 2008 to 2011.

Launching the programme, the Economy Minister Arlene Foster said: "Invest NI's Grant for R&D will help to stimulate greater levels of forward thinking and innovative future planning, enabling more companies to improve the effectiveness and competitiveness of the Northern Ireland economy, over the medium to long term."

The revision to Invest NI's R&D support structure was stimulated partly in response to the EU Commission's new guidelines on Research, Development and Innovation (R&D&I) State Aid.

The 2007 R&D Survey shows that business R&D spend in Northern Ireland rose by almost 7 per cent to £185 million - the highest figure on record.

### GRANT FOR R&D KEY FEATURES:

**Greater flexibility:** aid rates will depend on the nature of the research proposed, the size of the business and the collaborative nature of the project.

**Open to existing and potential clients:** regardless of size or previous experience of R&D activity.

**Innovation Advisors:** will provide hands-on support to businesses to make their applications for funding.

**Two stage funding:** businesses can undertake a Project Definition exercise to help clearly define an R&D project. Up to £50,000 of support is available for this stage. After this they can apply for the main grant support.

**New to R&D:** businesses with fewer than 50 employees that have never invested in R&D could get support of up to 75 per cent (max £70,000) of eligible project costs.

### HOW TO APPLY

To apply for support, businesses need only fill out one application form. The Innovation Advisors can help with this process. More information and details of how to apply are available at [www.investni.com/r+d](http://www.investni.com/r+d)

### >> FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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Taiwan

# HIGH GROWTH market in Asia

Invest NI is organising a multi-sector trade mission to Taiwan in October, which offers local companies a chance to explore this dynamic economy and take the first step into the lucrative Chinese marketplace.

**TAIWAN** (Republic of China) has a population of 23 million and a dynamic capitalist, export-driven economy with gradually decreasing state involvement in investment and foreign trade. GDP growth has averaged eight per cent over the past three decades and current GDP per capita is equal to the average of EU countries. Exports have provided the primary impetus for industrialisation and the country now has a substantial trade surplus.

Taiwan is a sophisticated technology-based economy dominated by small and medium sized businesses, rather than the large business groups.

**Leading technologies in the country include:**

- **bicycle manufacturing, eg: Giant Bicycles**
- **biotechnology**
- **semiconductor device fabrication**
- **laptops, such as Acer and Asus, the world leader in netbooks.**

Taiwan imported £912.9 million of British goods in 2006. The UK is highly visible in the Taiwanese domestic market, though locals may not realise

that names such as B&Q (to name one company with a successful operation there) are in fact British.

Taiwan's natural trading partners are its neighbours in north east Asia, and it can be a good stepping stone to the larger and more complex Chinese market.

Taiwan has a strong trading and investment relationship with the West, and is keen to diversify and build on its European links. It is also designated as one of the UK Trade and Investment's High Growth Markets.

The UK's major exports to Taiwan include machinery and transport equipment, chemicals and manufactured goods, but there are also opportunities for British firms in a range of sectors. The following gives a flavour of the range.

## OPPORTUNITIES IN TAIWAN

- Aerospace
- Agriculture
- Clothing, footwear and fashion
- Construction
- Creative and media
- Education and skills
- Environment
- Financial and legal services
- Food and drink
- Giftware
- Healthcare
- ICT
- Marine
- Power
- Rail
- Water

# BIGGER AND BETTER

## market visits programme for 2009

Almost 60 missions and trade exhibitions in international markets have been lined up by Invest NI to assist local companies seeking to grow export sales in 2009.

Invest NI's Market Visits Programme for 2009 includes first time trade missions to Russia, Taiwan and South Korea, France and Spain, as well as participation in global exhibitions for companies in key sectors such as construction, environmental technology, life sciences, food and ICT.

The extensive programme - the biggest ever planned by Invest NI - features

four missions to Arabian Gulf markets such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman and Kuwait, and two separate missions to India (Mumbai and Delhi, and Mumbai and Bangalore) and China (Tianjin, Shenyang and Beijing, and Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shanghai).

Companies in many sectors will also have opportunities to take part in 10 events in North America, Northern Ireland's biggest market outside the British Isles. These events include the Web 2.0 Expo in San Francisco and the Worldwide Microsoft Partner Conference in New Orleans.

Seven events are scheduled by Invest NI as part of its commitment to the construction industry. These include stands at international exhibitions such as Big 5 in Dubai, Intermat in

Paris, Eco Build and Future Build in London, Interbuild in Birmingham, Hillhead in Derbyshire, Irish Sustainable Building and Road Expo Ireland, both in Dublin.

In addition, construction and building companies will be able to explore opportunities in environmental and renewable technologies at exhibitions in Austria, Sweden, Germany, Scotland, and the Irish Republic. These include first time participation at Energiesparmess and World Sustainable Days in Wels, Austria, All-Energy 09 in Aberdeen, and the European Offshore Wind Conference in Stockholm.

Nine events are scheduled for food and drink processing, now Northern Ireland's biggest manufacturing industry, in markets as diverse as the US, Dubai and The Netherlands. The events include stands at major international shows such as Anuga in Cologne, Gulfood in Dubai and IFE in London, as well as niche exhibitions such as PLMA World of Private Label in Amsterdam.

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or visit: [www.investni.com/index/grow/trade/2009\\_trade\\_events\\_programme.htm](http://www.investni.com/index/grow/trade/2009_trade_events_programme.htm)**

## High expectations for Low Countries

The biggest-ever Invest NI mission to a European market visited The Netherlands in the first week of February.

Led by Economy Minister Arlene Foster, 36 companies made the journey to build trade and other business relationships.

The Netherlands is now the fourth most important European market for local manufacturers after the

Republic of Ireland, Germany and France. Customers in The Netherlands purchased goods worth £155 million in 2007-08, which is 10 per cent of Northern Ireland's total exports to markets on the continent.

The Minister said: "Northern Ireland companies have already established a range of trading activity with The Netherlands, providing products and services, from food, such as beef, bacon and healthy snacks, to buses, precision engineered parts and expert software for life sciences and other key industries.

"Both our economies are dependent on exports. We are keen to assist and encourage many more of our smaller companies to explore business opportunities in this important market which has longstanding links with the United Kingdom. Several successful global companies now have significant operations in Northern Ireland. Indeed, Dutch companies have been investing in Northern Ireland since the 1960s."

**BEST** known for its distinctive, award-winning range, Fermanagh Black Bacon, O'Doherty's counts top retailers such as Harrods among its customers, as well as gourmet chefs in prestigious restaurants across Europe.

The business is run by Pat O'Doherty and operates from a retail butchery business and an EU approved processing plant in Enniskillen where it employs 30. Pat took over the business from his father James who established it in 1957, and through his passion for quality and innovative flavours and techniques has created in Fermanagh Black Bacon an internationally recognised brand. Fermanagh Black Bacon first made an appearance in 1994 when Mr O'Doherty created a secret recipe using traditional ancient dry curing techniques and a blend of herbs and

spices. Since then the distinctive bacon has won a series of accolades and the range has been expanded to include Europe's first nitrate-free bacon, and most recently a wafer thin Parma ham-styled bacon.

The new product was launched at Europe's gourmet food show, Salone de Gusto, in Turin, Italy, last October. O'Doherty's was one of six local companies assisted by Invest NI to attend the prestigious event.

Mr O'Doherty says: "The wafer thin bacon has been developed for salads or for wrapping around other foods including starters, a bit like Parma ham. I set out to create a rich flavour, a product totally free from additives and completely natural.

**"In the past, I've launched other products at this event including the successful nitrate-free bacon. My business is focused on natural and wholesome foods. The bacon is matured using natural dry curing techniques over three months."**

supporting its attendance at international food shows such as Salone de Gusto and by introducing it to potential buyers. It was through Invest NI that the company was introduced to the buyers at Harrods. O'Doherty's was also helped to strengthen its export capability by taking part in an Invest NI market entry programme.

Maynard Mawhinney, Invest NI's Director of Food, says: "O'Doherty's is one of our most innovative small food businesses and this new product will help to strengthen Northern Ireland's international profile and reputation as a source of quality, wholesome and natural food.

"Encouraging and assisting smaller food companies to invest in innovation for developing opportunities in global market niches is one of our strategic priorities."

O'Doherty's other gourmet products include bacon cured in seaweed and brandy, oak smoked bacon, traditional sausages, wild venison and pheasant. The focus on quality does not just begin with the curing process but with the techniques Mr O'Doherty uses to rear his 200-strong free range herd of carefully selected Tamworth pigs on Innishcorkish Island on Lough Erne.

Invest NI has been instrumental in helping O'Doherty's grow its export business, principally through



# SECRET ingredient of success

For over 50 years Enniskillen family butchery, O'Doherty's Fine Meats, has been supplying top quality beef, venison and game initially to a local customer base but now to discerning customers worldwide.

>> Pat O'Doherty outside his shop in Enniskillen

Issue Focus

# INVEST NI INNOVATION & EXPORT AWARDS 2009

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ULSTER BANK

## Shortlist Announced

**There was an excellent response to Invest NI's first Innovation & Export Awards 2009 with 111 applications received from a broad range of client companies.**

The following businesses have been shortlisted in the five award categories. Winners will be announced at the awards dinner on 18 February 2009. The winners will receive a portion of a tailored package of support valued at £105,000 in total.

### 1. BEST NEW INNOVATION AWARD

Recognising research, development and design excellence in a new product, service or process launched within the last two years.

BASE  
Core Systems (NI)  
Embedded Monitoring Systems  
James Leckey Design  
Rainvault

### 2. INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Recognising the outstanding contribution made to economic prosperity and the advancement of innovation in Northern Ireland.

BASE  
James Leckey Design  
Marturion  
Radox Laboratories  
Singularity

### 3. BEST EMERGING EXPORTER AWARD

Recognising the outstanding export achievement of a business that has been exporting goods or services for three years or less.

ACT Detection Dogs  
A&K Landscape Retail  
Colloide Engineering Systems  
InspecVision  
Linwoods

### 4. EXPORTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Recognising the outstanding export achievement of a business that has been exporting goods or services for four years or more.

Almac Group  
AJ Power  
CDE Ireland  
Latens Systems  
Radox Laboratories

### 5. BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARD

Recognising the outstanding achievement of a business that can demonstrate exceptional financial returns, strong export growth, delivery of innovation strategies and market leadership in their sector.

Almac Group  
James Leckey Design  
Mash Direct  
Radox Laboratories  
Singularity



INVEST NI  
INNOVATION  
& EXPORT  
AWARDS 2009  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ULSTER BANK

# Company profiles



### ACT Detection Dogs

The company breeds and trains detection dogs for law enforcement agencies worldwide. It exports 95 per cent of the dogs to customers in Singapore, Italy, USA and Sweden. ACT Detection Dogs offers full traceability for all its dogs, giving it an advantage over its competitors.

» Mark Bleakney of Invest NI's Southern Regional Office (right) and Christopher Hanlon of Downpatrick-based ACT Detection Dogs with Gerry, one of the company's highly trained Labrador Retrievers



### BASE

Aerospace company, BASE, specialises in stress engineering and structural design and systems. It developed an integrated design, configuration management process and Prince 2 project management service, which is unique in aerospace engineering worldwide.

» Tracy Meharg, Invest NI's Managing Director of Innovation and Capability, with Base Directors, David Raymond, Ian Kelly, and Peter Hinds

### A&K Landscape Retail

This small company spotted a gap in the market for high quality outdoor cigarette waste solutions and designed a range of planters with an integrated ashtray system. The products are now sold into 22 European regions.

### Almac Group

Pharmaceutical company Almac is a key employer in Northern Ireland. It has enjoyed consistent growth since it was established in 2001 and virtually all recent growth has been through overseas markets. One of its key strategies is to invest in cutting-edge, patentable technologies.



### AJ Power

Engineering company, AJ Power, operates in the power generation market designing and manufacturing state-of-the-art diesel generating sets. The company has grown rapidly and the AJ Power brand is now sold and supported in over 40 countries.

» Dr James Cochrane, Engineering Manager and Joe Bradley, Sales Director of AJ Power, with Alan Hingston, Invest NI's Trade Director

### CDE Ireland

The Cookstown company has been designing and manufacturing materials handling equipment since 2000. The company has achieved significant export success with over 50 per cent of sales now in the Middle East where the company has set up a joint venture company CDE Asia.

### Colloide Engineering Systems

Specialising in the design and construction of water and waste water treatment plants, the Cookstown company has established itself as brand leaders in niche markets such as the landfill leachate treatment sector. Export sales account for around 90 per cent of turnover.



### Core Systems (NI)

A provider of IT systems and services, Belfast-based Core's most recent development is an Inmate Information Centre - a multi-purpose, interactive system designed specifically for prisons. The system uses biometric log-in and the company is pursuing sales in the lucrative US market.

» Patricia O'Hagan, Managing Director of Core Systems, shows Alan Hingston, Invest NI's Trade Director, the company's latest biometric technology system

### Embedded Monitoring Systems

The Co Down company developed a multi-function monitor and fault analyser for electricity sub-stations, which solves many of the problems associated with standard systems that send data to a master station. Sub.net has an embedded data analysis and report generator and can send reports by email, fax or SMS within minutes.

### InspecVision

The Larne company, set up in 2003 by Dr Jan Antonis, has developed a range of photogrammetric metrology equipment for industrial applications. The machines can be used to reverse engineer components from samples and drawings and have enjoyed growing export success.



### James Leckey Design

The company designs and manufactures equipment for children with special needs. In 2006, after an extensive product development phase, the company launched three new ranges to meet the needs of different age groups, Squiggles (0-5), Mygo (5-12) and Kit (12-16). Since then it has dramatically improved business performance.

» Gary O'Hagan (left), Managing Director of James Leckey Design and Richard Plunkett, Finance Director, show some of the company's Squiggles range of products to Carol Keery, Invest NI's Director of Innovation, Research and Technology

### Latens Systems

Software company, Latens, established in 2002, has 100 per cent export sales, selling into 20 countries worldwide. Specialising in software for digital TV networks, it has enjoyed rapid growth and has won a number of technology awards.

### Linwoods

One of only two food companies shortlisted, Linwoods is a bakery, dairy and health food manufacturer. In recent years it has focused on developing a range of unique health food products, which are achieving growing export success and are currently sold in the UK, Republic of Ireland, Spain and Holland.

### Marturion

Lisburn company, Marturion, designs and develops electronics and embedded software systems for medical and non-medical devices. The company has a strong focus on innovation and the development of intellectual property.

### Mash Direct

In 2003 the company diversified into prepared potato and vegetable products to counteract the decline in income from its standard farm produce. The result has been a £4 million business selling into most major supermarkets and the award winning brand has become a market leader.

### Singularity

Londonderry software company, Singularity, has a strong record of innovation and is considered a leader in the field of knowledge centric process automation and agility. In the last three years it has doubled its turnover, and exports almost 100 per cent of its products and services.

### Rainvault

Rainvault custom designs, manufactures, and installs rain harvesting systems. The system takes rain water from the roof and stores it in an underground tank for use on demand. The system uses no chemicals and is environmentally friendly.

### Randex Laboratories

Working in the clinical diagnostics industry, Randax Laboratories now manufactures 7 per cent of the world's clinical chemistry products. It exports 95 per cent of its products. The company has a consistent focus on innovation and over a quarter of its turnover is reinvested in research and development.



# BIG ideas

Entrepreneurship



>> L-R Back - Gerry Ford, Advantage, Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster, Myleene Klass and Danny Moore, Co-CEO of NYSE Euronext, Belfast Front - Peter McGlone, St Colmcille's Primary School, Omagh, Taylor-Lee McConnell and Nicole Harbinson, Forth River Primary School and Darragh O'Kane, St Colmcille's Primary School, Omagh

In the last financial year, 2007-08, Invest NI helped nearly 3,500 new businesses to set up. Yet Northern Ireland still lags behind the UK average for entrepreneurial activity.

Two groups that Invest NI is particularly keen to encourage to be more entrepreneurial are young people and females, and it supports a range of initiatives targeted at them.

## WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

In November Northern Ireland's young people, from primary school age through to university students, got the chance to show their business creativity in a competition part funded by Invest NI.

The Big Idea! competition attracted applications from 180 schools and generated an impressive diversity of business ideas. The young people

were tasked with coming up with an idea that would be both commercially viable and could also have a positive impact on their place of learning, business or wider community.

The resulting ideas included designing and selling cards, producing reusable bags and providing a Mobile ICT Training Unit in areas of social deprivation. At The Big Idea! final event, hosted by celebrity television presenter and singer, Myleene Klass, the following winners and their ideas were announced:

### Portstewart Primary School:

**Idea:** organising a Portstewart Film Festival to showcase a number of short films produced entirely by the talents and expertise of pupils.

### Abbey Christian Brothers':

**Idea:** designing The Little Linker, a device that young children hold on to when out walking on school trips to improve safety.

### South West College (John Moore):

**Idea:** collecting waste paper and compressing it into briquette form that can be used in open fires and stoves as an alternative to traditional fuel sources.

### Tactility Factory (University of

**Ulster): Idea:** developing the mass market interest in Girli Concrete™, in order to attract potential partners to whom Tactility Factory can licence the technology and process.

### Music Theatre 4 Youth (social enterprise):

**Idea:** taking the first step in making MT4Uth an all-Ireland company by exporting the business model into the Republic of Ireland.

The winners of the post-primary category, Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School in Newry, won a trip to the New York Stock Exchange, sponsored by NYSE Euronext

Advanced Trading Solutions, the innovative commercial technology division of NYSE Euronext.

The young entrepreneurs joined the Economy Minister, Arlene Foster, for a meeting with Duncan Niederauer, CEO of NYSE Euronext at the New York Stock Exchange, and toured the world famous Wall Street financial centre, including its world renowned trading floor.

Duncan Niederauer said: "NYSE Euronext was delighted to welcome the Minister and these young entrepreneurs to the New York Stock Exchange. The students are representative of the creative business talent that exists in Northern Ireland, and we are keen to help nurture this ability and ensure that it leads to more commercial success for the region."

Minister Foster said: "Through Invest NI and its enterprise partners, young entrepreneurs have access to a range of mentoring advice and financial help to bring their business concepts to fruition and sell their products and services outside Northern Ireland."

The Big Idea! was the flagship event of Global Entrepreneurship Week. The final event was funded by Invest NI, the Department of Education and the Department for Employment and Learning. The regional stages of the competition were delivered by Advantage and other enterprise partners.

>> For further information on support for young entrepreneurs please contact Graham Pollock:  
T: 028 9069 8169  
E: graham.pollock@investni.com

# Speeding to success



» On their marks, ready for the off, Women in Business members at their SpeedMeet event in Belfast. Pictured L-R Aideen Ward (Genesis, Dublin) Christine Boyle (WIB), Patricia Gardiner (Walking Matters.ie) and Claire Herron (Invest NI)

## INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

- 10 MARCH 2009

Invest NI is pleased to support a half day conference that will feature a range of female speakers including Pauline Quigley, NI Director Vodafone, Patricia O'Hagan, Core Systems and Professor Pauline Murphy, pppd Consulting. It will be chaired by Yvette Shapiro, business journalist.

The aim of the conference, which will be held in La Mon Hotel & Country Club, is to both inspire and inform delegates to improve their own performance as business leaders and that of their organisations. Invest NI clients are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to hear the experiences of successful local female entrepreneurs, network and build up valuable contacts.

» For more information and to book a place please visit: [www.iod.com/northernireland/events](http://www.iod.com/northernireland/events)

Sponsored by Vodafone

» For further information on support for female entrepreneurs please contact Joy Knox:  
**T: 028 9069 8519**  
**E: [joy.knox@investni.com](mailto:joy.knox@investni.com)**

## WOMEN IN BUSINESS

The Women in Business network for Northern Ireland runs a programme of events over the year to support local female entrepreneurs. The events are funded by Invest NI.

Recent events include a speed meeting involving 50 female entrepreneurs who took part in over 350 meetings. The format was based on popular 'speed dating' events and the aim was to help businesses access new customers to help them weather the current economic downturn.

Christine Boyle, Chair of Women in Business NI, comments: "The atmosphere in the hall was electric.

We managed to facilitate over 350 one-to-one meetings with women from all over Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. We are delighted to provide these networking and business opportunities to female entrepreneurs and feedback from participants shows events like this have real commercial value."

Invest NI supports a range of activities across Northern Ireland to help female-led businesses increase their profitability. Many of these activities involve networking and peer mentoring and talks from successful female entrepreneurs. Claire Herron of Invest NI's Entrepreneurship Development Team, explains: "Collaborative networking can help women in business form stronger links with other female-led companies and build relationships with suppliers, buyers and a range of stakeholders. It is an effective exercise for developing capability and improving competitiveness to achieve commercial goals."

# LOCAL FOOD COMPANIES GET A TASTE OF NEW ZEALAND

Food

**THE** biggest ever agri-food sector mission from Northern Ireland recently visited New Zealand as part of Invest NI's drive to fast track the development of world beating food innovation and global brands by local companies.

Over an eight-day period the 25 strong innovation and best practice mission to New Zealand split into three separate delegations to conduct more than 80 meetings in all parts of New Zealand with the country's major red meat, lamb, venison and dairy food processors, farmers, industry associations, research institutes and universities.

Included in the Northern Ireland delegation were leading industry figures, including chief executives of Northern Ireland's biggest dairy and red meat companies, and leading industry representatives from the Ulster Farmers' Union, Livestock and Meat Commission, Northern Ireland Meat Exporters Association, Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association, National Sheep Association, National Beef Association, as well as officials from the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development and Invest NI. Almost three quarters of the red meat and lamb sector by turnover in Northern Ireland were represented and half the dairy processing industry.

Maynard Mawhinney, Invest NI's Food Director, says: "New Zealand, like Northern Ireland, is an island economy in which food processing is among the most important industries and the biggest export earner.

"New Zealand also faces similar problems as Northern Ireland does arising from a peripheral position and a small domestic marketplace.

"The three-strand mission (covering red meat, dairy and primary producers)

was tasked with bringing home some of the best practice, knowledge and innovation that has made New Zealand a world class exemplar in terms of a small nation 'punching above its weight' in the global food industry - an achievement Invest NI wishes to help our companies emulate.

**The group had an opportunity to see how New Zealand food processors are addressing global challenges and ensuring sustainable long-term growth through techniques including export-focused branding, which has seen their red meat and dairy brands such as New Zealand Lamb and Beef, Anchor and Golden Churn dairy products, and Manuka Honey become global household names.**

"Northern Ireland has a number of very successful international food and drink brands. We want to encourage and assist many more companies to recognise how they can increase margins and future-proof themselves against volatile markets by investing in new and innovative branded products," he adds.



The New Year has brought new opportunities for local food companies to innovate and export, kicking off with the biggest ever agri-food sector mission from Northern Ireland.

# BITE SIZE NEWS



»» Damian McCarthy, Commercial Director, Norbev (left), Maynard Mawhinney, Invest NI Food Director, David Halliday, Norbev General Manager, and Karl Devlin, Invest NI Food Marketing Advisor



»» Kestrel Foods' Machteld McKinstry with Alan Hingston, Invest NI Trade Director



»» Seamus Doherty, Retail Services Director, Doherty and Gray, Maynard Mawhinney, Invest NI Food Director, and Sean Looby, the company's National Accounts Manager

## Norbev Makro contract

Contract bottler Norbev in Ballymena has won a contract from Elbar Services, the Derby-based food distributor, to supply a range of drinks to the UK operations of Makro, the leading cash 'n' carry chain, in a deal worth around £1.5 million. Elbar is a major supplier of products to Makro depots. Norbev secured the contract from Elbar following a meeting organised by Karl Devlin, an Invest NI food marketing advisor in Great Britain.

## Kestrel goes Dutch

Kestrel Foods in Portadown, a market leader in premium healthy snacks such as dried fruits, seeds and nuts, has won its first business in The Netherlands following its participation in Invest NI's 'Going Dutch' initiative. The company is supplying its Forest Feast products to two of the leading retail chains in The Netherlands - Super de Boer, headquartered in Amersfoort, and De Bijenkorf of Amsterdam.

## OOH Live

Food and drink products from 18 local companies were marketed by Invest NI at a new snack and convenience foods showcase in London in November. The products featured on an Invest NI 'Northern Ireland Naturally' presentation at the OOH (Out of Home) Live show, at the Earls Court exhibition centre. OOH Live is a new trade show which is exclusively aimed at operators involved in the 'food to go' brunch, lunch and snacking markets.

## Food innovation

In November Invest NI was one of the main sponsors of the 7th Annual World Food Technology and Innovation Forum 2008, and also assisted four local companies to take part in the event. The Forum is geared to top executives responsible for R&D, innovation and marketing activities in the food sector and covered healthy eating trends, global buying behaviours, personalised nutrition, environmental issues and sustainability, energy efficiency, and opportunities for new products in sectors such as ingredients and markets such as Asia.

## Maximum exposure

The biggest ever presentation of food and drink from Northern Ireland was featured at the BBC Good Food Show in Birmingham in November. Invest NI organised the presentation, which provided trade buyers with exposure to a showcase of Northern Ireland produce. It was part of Invest NI's strategic focus on helping local food companies, to win business and increased brand recognition in target markets.

## Sausage success

Top European food retailer Carrefour has listed Irish farmhouse styled pork sausages from Doherty and Gray in Ballymena for sale in supermarkets across Spain. The listing, Doherty and Gray's first with Carrefour, follows the company's participation in a joint Invest NI/Livestock and Meat Commission 'meet the buyer' initiative. Carrefour is now including Doherty and Gray's range of Rankin Selection Irish pork sausages in its chill cabinets and deli counters.

# Regional NEWS

Regional News



>> Cathal Rogers (left), Managing Director of Rogers Fencing in Draperstown, is pictured with Des Gartland, Invest NI North West Regional Office Manager, with one of Rogers Fencing's Security Gates

## Innovative Healthcare Academy set up

Calcara International Healthcare (Calcara) in Coleraine has established a Healthcare Academy to offer specialist international training consultancy, exclusively for the nursing, nursing assistant, medical and allied healthcare sectors internationally. The company was established in November 2007 by Dr Pauline Hunter.

Invest NI is helping the company with international marketing activity through its Growth Accelerator Programme (GAP).

Des Gartland, Manager of Invest NI's North West Regional Office, says: "Our GAP assistance has been geared to enable the company to move ahead quickly with its plans to develop a strong position in its target markets."

Dr Hunter says: "Our objectives are to empower and enable qualified nurses, doctors, occupational therapists and physiotherapists to work abroad and achieve maximum professional development, and to provide clients with the highest standards of healthcare recruitment and training services."

## Securing **NEW BUSINESS**

Rogers Fencing Systems in Draperstown has won a series of important contracts to supply steel security gates to high profile clients in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

Invest NI is helping the company to develop its marketing and sales outside Northern Ireland.

Rogers Fencing is manufacturing and installing high specification gates for

EDF Energy, the UK gas and electricity supplier, at one of the biggest ever construction projects in the London area, as well as for the National Grid and the Post Office.

The company has also supplied and installed high specification security gates for ESB installations in the Republic of Ireland and locally at the George Best Belfast City Airport.

## Newry company gallops to **EXPORT SUCCESS**

Horse First is on course to more than double its export turnover thanks to support from Invest NI for an ambitious export marketing plan which will target markets in Great Britain, USA, Belgium and The Netherlands.

The Newry company manufactures mineral and vitamin supplements designed to promote the health, calmness and all-round wellbeing of horses. The products are already used by 18 of the world's top 20 show jumpers and event riders.

Patrick Hughes, Joint Managing Director of Horse First, says: "Our products are the result of over 30 years' experience in the world of horse breeding and equestrian competitions. With the help of Invest NI we anticipate that we will achieve our ambitious sales targets in the next 18 months."

>> Mark Bleakney, Invest NI's Southern Regional Office Manager (left), and Patrick Hughes, Managing Director of Horse First



## Minister visits North East

**Enterprise Minister Arlene Foster recently visited companies in Co Antrim to see at first hand how Invest NI is helping businesses during the economic downturn. The Minister also met with local stakeholders at Invest NI's Regional Office in Ballymena.**

The Minister said: "My meetings with companies in the region, including Drainmaster, Shaw Automation and Moore Concrete, highlighted how Invest NI's range of support can help locally-owned businesses to maintain competitiveness in export markets and develop quality employment opportunities, despite the global economic downturn.

"It is critical that firms not only seek out short-term solutions to survive the downturn, but also plan for the future and continue to invest in their R&D programmes.

"When this current downturn ends, it will be those companies that have maintained their innovation and R&D capabilities that will be ready to seize competitive advantage in the global market."

>> The Minister is pictured with Alan Adair, Managing Director of Drainmaster, as he explains the rapid repair solution his company provides for damaged pipes underground



## Cooking up **EXPORT BUSINESS**

**Revolutionary cooking technology pioneered by Rooney Fish in Kilkeel is expanding export markets for its range of langoustines and other shellfish.**

Invest NI helped the company to develop the innovative processing technology, to expand into European markets and to implement a new quality standard.

Rooney Fish is the leading supplier of fresh, chilled and now cooked langoustines and other shellfish to customers in Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain and Russia. It has been assisted by Invest NI to achieve SALSA, (Safe and Local Supplier Approval), a major UK quality accreditation.

The new and fully automated cooking machinery for langoustines is a world

first for the company. Andrew Rooney, the company's joint Managing Director, says the innovative cooking process gives it a competitive edge in its key markets.

"Customers were asking us to supply cooked products and we decided to focus resources on developing a new process that maintained the flavour and quality of the shellfish. We are now backing up this substantial investment with marketing activities including the creation of a series of menus developed by our team of talented chefs."

>> Andrew Rooney (right), joint Managing Director of Rooney Fish in Kilkeel, pictured with Maynard Mawhinney, Invest NI's Food Director, at the launch of the company's new products

**Cookstown-based company FSL Electronics Ltd achieved over £750,000 of export sales in 2008, including a deal to supply products for the next Soccer World Cup in South Africa, with support from Invest NI.**

FSL Electronics designs, manufactures and distributes technologically advanced products for sports organisations and other sectors such as materials handling and security. Its products include digital scoreboards, message panels, queuing displays, remote control equipment and an innovative electronic fitness mat.

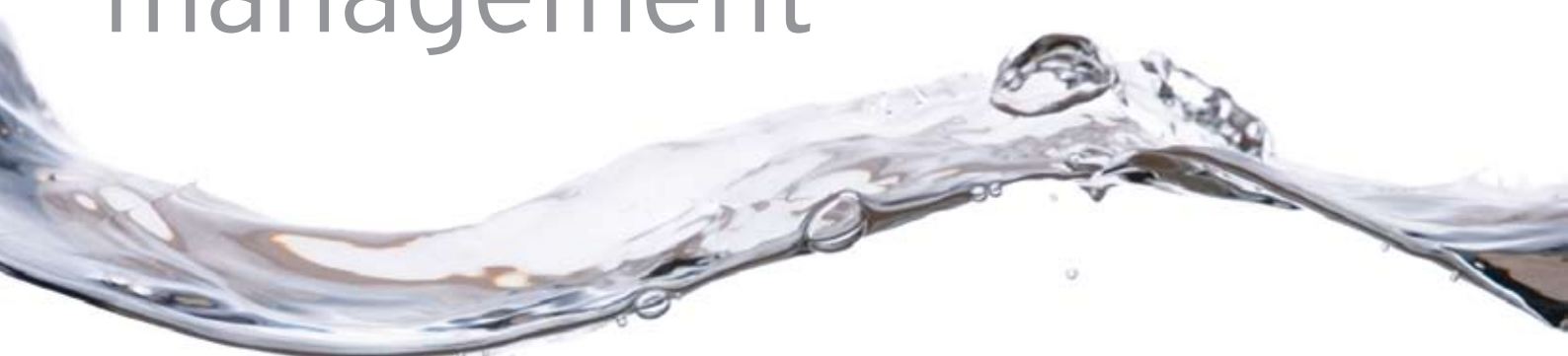
John Meenan, Managing Director of FSL Electronics, says: "We have worked closely with Invest NI to take a more strategic approach to our business, develop new products, increase the quality of existing products and improve our profitability and competitiveness in external markets.

"Blackburn Rovers Football Club and the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) are among our customer base, and we also supplied the scoreboard for Mbombela Stadium, one of the new sports arenas being built for the 2010 Soccer World Cup."

## Technology company scores in 2008



# Benefits flow from water management



In the current tough trading environment many businesses are looking for every opportunity to cut costs and become leaner. Being water wise is a proven route to reducing overheads.

Though they may not realise it, businesses pay for water twice - firstly to receive it and secondly to have the effluent taken away. Minimising water use is therefore an obvious way to save money. Less obvious is how to go about it.

Envirowise, funded in Northern Ireland by Invest NI, offers free, independent support to businesses to help them become more resource efficient and save money. Last year the organisation launched The Big Splash Campaign to help businesses reduce water use. Eight companies signed up for the initiative and are now seeing measurable cost savings as a result.

Sam McCloskey, Northern Ireland Regional Manager for Envirowise, says: "NI Water supplies 619 million litres of water every day and treats 134 million m<sup>3</sup> of wastewater each year. Water costs are becoming an

increasing pressure on Northern Ireland's businesses. Those businesses that took part in the Big Splash Campaign engaged with our specialists through one-to-one follow ups but for those that haven't taken part in the campaign there are plenty of ways they can start to implement change within their own business."

These ways include accurate metering, looking at whether an effluent stream from one process can be re-used as an input to another process, and treating effluents prior to discharge, which will reduce the cost incurred for further treatment by the water company. Reducing overall water consumption is, of course, the obvious starting point and begins with tracking water use and identifying alternative sources of water such as rain water.

Olive Hill, Invest NI's Director of Technology and Process Development, says: "With businesses in Northern Ireland paying for their water supply and the processing of any effluent they generate, they can achieve major cost savings by reducing their reliance on water where possible. Seemingly simple efficiency measures can make a real difference to overall profitability.

**“For example, fixing a leaky tap can save up to 60 litres an hour of water being wasted.”**

Envirowise, in partnership with Invest NI, can help companies to take the first steps towards water efficiency.

**>> FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

The Envirowise website, [www.envirowise.go.uk](http://www.envirowise.go.uk), gives tips on how businesses can begin to examine and measure their water use and associated costs.

Alternatively contact Invest NI's Sustainable Development Team:  
**T:** 028 9069 8868  
**E:** [sustainabledev@investni.com](mailto:sustainabledev@investni.com)

# EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING

## Environment

Dungiven building industry business, Cross Concrete, and Rainvault in Draperstown are proof that every cloud really has a silver lining, particularly if it's a rain cloud. The two companies are working together on the manufacture and marketing of a unique system for harvesting and conserving rainwater.

The Rainvault system is unique in that it has an advanced control/monitoring system and automatic control panel. In addition, where a mains water supply is available, the system automatically switches over to it, until the required maintenance has been carried out. The system has already been installed in the industrial sector in high profile companies such as Tobermore Concrete.

Cross Concrete has developed and is manufacturing a novel water storage tank to complement Rainvault's water harvesting system. The tank features an innovative rainwater purification system, which enables rainwater to be used for drinking.

Dr Ambrose McCloskey, Cross Concrete's Managing Director, says: "The new precast concrete system for conserving rainwater is the outcome of a decision to develop our product range to include underground liquid storage tanks. Our research identified a clear market opportunity from the growing trend towards water conservation.

"Rainwater is being seen increasingly as an important natural resource. We were aware of the work being carried out by Rainvault on the development of such a system and of its need for concrete tanks. Pooling our expertise made good business sense.

"Invest NI helped us to develop the tank for Rainvault through the Product and Process Development scheme. The main objective was to design and build a mould and production facility to allow low labour input. The project focused on innovation in that it increased our capability through the design and delivery of complex concrete mixes. We see a very significant market opportunity for the new eco-product."

Des Gartland, Manager of Invest NI's North West Regional Office, says:

"Rainwater harvesting products are becoming evermore popular, with an increasing market size across the UK and Ireland. By 2016, all new dwellings must be zero carbon, and new products like this system will be part of the solution."

"Cross Concrete and Rainvault took part in the Invest NI 'Construct for Growth' programme to help construction companies in the North West explore new opportunities from sustainable products."



>> Pictured top with the new rain harvesting tank: (left) Dr Ambrose McCloskey, Managing Director, Cross Concrete, Vivion McSorley, Managing Director, Rainvault, and Des Gartland, Manager, Invest NI NWRO

>> Pictured above: Rainvault's Vivion McSorley with Invest NI's Mary Gormley

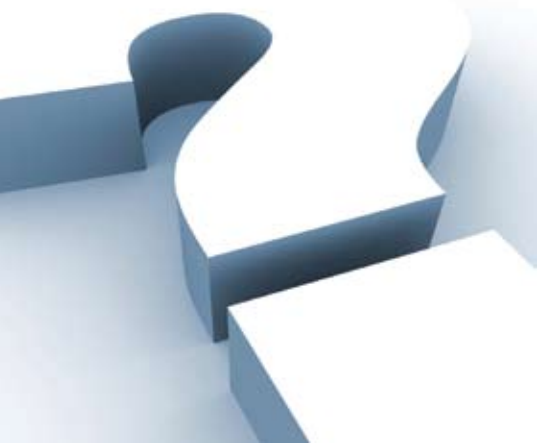
## WATER COSTS

Water type	Cost
UK mains supply	£0.60-£1.60/m <sup>3</sup> * (standard metered tariff)
Chlorinated water	£0.85-£2.20/m <sup>3</sup>
Softened water	£2-£3.70/m <sup>3</sup>
Demineralised/deionised water	£2-£3.70/m <sup>3</sup>
Condensate	£5-£7/m <sup>3</sup>
Steam	£20-£22/tonne

\* Depends on mains water supply

Source: [www.envirowise.gov.uk/ni/Topics-and-Issues/Water/Useful-Facts-and-Figures.html](http://www.envirowise.gov.uk/ni/Topics-and-Issues/Water/Useful-Facts-and-Figures.html)

# WHAT'S NEW?



## LAUNCH OF ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCE

Invest NI has launched a new online learning and employability resource for schools, in conjunction with the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

>> Pictured helping to launch the new online learning and employability resource for schools is Hannah Davenport of Friends School, Lisburn, with (on screen) Ian Murphy, Invest NI; Ryan Walsh, Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Newry; and Richard Hanna, CCEA

The website ([www.clk2do.com](http://www.clk2do.com)) is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland and is designed to develop an ethos of innovation and enterprise among young people. It provides a range of business lessons and activities for 11-14 year olds and is available to all post-primary schools.

Invest NI's Managing Director of Clients and Entrepreneurship, Ian Murphy, says: "Business skills such as team working, perseverance, decision making, risk management, networking and inventiveness are all key to commercial success, and this new facility can help improve capability in these areas."

Richard Hanna, CCEA's Director of Education Strategy, says: "CCEA worked closely with Invest NI to develop this engaging and interactive resource that is closely aligned to the Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum. Clk2do.com can be used in many ways to support Learning for Life and Work in the Revised Curriculum and is particularly relevant to Education for Employability."



## NEW WEBSITE FOR ENTERPRISE EUROPE NETWORK

The Enterprise Europe Network offers an integrated one-stop shop for local SMEs, and larger companies, that want to benefit from technology transfer, experience sharing and business networking opportunities across the EU. It provides practical advice and guidance on matters such as European legislation and help with market research in countries across the region in order to identify potential new export opportunities. The Network has created a new website ([www.enterpriseeuropeni.com](http://www.enterpriseeuropeni.com)) giving details of its services, events, news and a facility allowing businesses to search a database of over 4,000 technology requests and offers, business co-operation profiles and research partner requests.

## MORE RESOURCES FOR DESIGN SERVICES

Invest NI is rolling out a new Design Strategy to build on the success of the current Design Development Programme. The strategy means significantly increasing resources allocated to design services over the next three years. The enhanced service includes:

- an Invest NI Design Manager - a new role to co-ordinate design activities to ensure maximum benefit to the businesses;
- increased funding to encourage greater volume of business participation in all design programmes including the new Mini Design Development Programme;
- an awareness campaign to highlight the benefits of design to Northern Ireland industry and stakeholders.

NI Business Info

**NIBUSINESS  
INFO.CO.UK**
**Practical Advice for Business**

 campaign drives  
thousands to...

**nibusinessinfo.co.uk website**

**EVERY** week over 5,000 people visit Invest NI's [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinessinfo.co.uk) website to take advantage of the comprehensive and practical information available about starting and growing a business.

The 2008 figures for usage of the site show a 57 per cent increase over 2007 and the upward trend is continuing.

Rodney McMullan, head of Invest NI's [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinessinfo.co.uk) team, says they are delighted with the figures that reflect a growing awareness of the value of the plainly written site, which is continuously updated to maintain its accuracy and relevance.

"In June last year we launched a new marketing campaign for the site which focused on key themes such as Trading Internationally, Environment and Energy, Employing People and Credit Crunch. The increase in visits to the site - 116,000 visits between June and December 2008 - is an indication of the success of the campaign.

"In the last few months, when many businesses have been feeling the effects of the economic downturn, the site has been an invaluable source of information about topics such as cash flow management, increasing efficiency and redundancy. Business people feel that they can trust the information on the site and appreciate the interactive tools that deliver information tailored to their needs," adds Mr McMullan.



>> Pictured in one of the [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinessinfo.co.uk) branded taxis are Rodney McMullan, [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinessinfo.co.uk) Team Manager and Mark Oliver, Invest NI Marketing Executive

## REAL HELP FOR BUSINESS

A new section on the [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinessinfo.co.uk) website gives details of the government's recently announced package of financial measures to provide real help to firms through the economic downturn.

[www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/realhelp](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/realhelp) gives information on the new measures which are:

- a £10 billion Working Capital Scheme, securing up to £20 billion of short term bank lending to companies with a turnover of up to £500 million;
- an Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme, securing up to £1.3 billion of additional bank loans to small firms with a turnover of up to £25 million; and

- a £75 million Capital for Enterprise Fund to invest in small businesses which need equity.

The site has an interactive tool which will help businesses to find out which schemes may be suitable for them. There are also links to information on other sources of funding and support.

## BEAT THE CREDIT CRUNCH

The [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinessinfo.co.uk) Beat the Credit Crunch section has guides to help businesses address the current economic challenges. These include guides on keeping your customers and securing new sales, managing your finances, protecting your business during the recession and protecting your staff. Visit [www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/creditcrunch](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/creditcrunch) to find out more.

# View from overseas

## THE INVEST NI TEAM IN DÜSSELDORF

**IN JULY 2007** Invest NI established its Trade Development Centre (NITDC) in Düsseldorf, home to industrial giants such as ThyssenKrupp, Mannesmann and Henkel, not to mention the 10,000 foreign companies also located there. The city hosts over 40 major exhibitions per year, 23 of which are the world's leading shows in their sector, attracting 1.5 million visitors in 2007. Düsseldorf is also the capital of Germany's most industrialised state, North Rhine Westphalia.



The NITDC in Düsseldorf is headed up by Adrian O'Hare, who has over ten years' experience in Germany, both with Invest NI and its predecessor, the IDB. Adrian has worked closely in the market with a wide range of sectors such as automotive, engineering, healthcare, aerospace and ICT, both on the inward investment and trade support side.

Markus Rehkopp is Senior Trade Advisor, who prior to joining the IDB in 1998 worked as a PR & Marketing Consultant for a number of renowned agencies. Markus has helped develop and implement PR and marketing strategies primarily for the German market but also for France and the Benelux countries, involving all the important industrial sectors.

A recent addition to the office in Düsseldorf is Adisa Muratovic. Adisa maintains strong links with her native Bosnia, which are proving extremely useful in exploring opportunities for a number of Northern Ireland companies.

### TAILORED SUPPORT DELIVERING SUCCESS

The team in Düsseldorf is helping Northern Ireland companies, large and small, to win business in Germany, Europe's largest economy.



A cluster of around 20 smaller companies is now doing significant business in Germany with advice and practical support from Adrian and his team. These include BASE, the Dundonald-based aerospace consultancy, Maydown Precision Engineering in Londonderry, McCauley Trailers of Toomebridge, Premier Electrics, Bellaghy, Empowerment Quality Engineering (EQE), an Omagh-based software testing company, and Orthodox, a Belfast company specialising in medical devices. All have found the services provided by the Düsseldorf team to be immensely beneficial.

Two aerospace companies, Maydown Precision Engineering and BASE, were helped to win important business with Airbus, a corporation both had been targeting for some considerable time. The Düsseldorf office helped the companies to develop and implement a strategy that opened the right doors to the world's second biggest aerospace organisation. And both companies fully acknowledge the quality support from Invest NI in Germany.

"When we began to work with the Invest NI team in Düsseldorf," says Sean Phelan, Managing Director of Maydown Precision, "we really didn't know what was possible. The Airbus-dominated European aerospace sector is overwhelming in its complexity. Adrian O'Hare and Markus Rehkopp have helped us to position ourselves in the sector. As a direct result of the Düsseldorf initiative, we are now doing work in Belgium, Spain and Finland, supplying machined components for the Airbus 330 200F and the A400M aircraft programmes." Maydown manufactures precision engineered components for a range of industries including aerospace and is a major supplier of products to Bombardier.

Peter Hinds, BASE Director, adds: "We had been targeting Airbus for many years but the breakthrough came as direct result of contacts established by the Düsseldorf office. Earlier this year we secured a very significant package of work from Airbus Laupheim, near Hamburg, and are now working to further develop this potentially very important business relationship."

**Companies come to us in all shapes, sizes and sectors but a focused cluster sectoral approach is always the best.**



» The Düsseldorf team I-r Adrian O'Hare, Adisa Muratovic and Markus Rehkopp

"Two sectors in which we are very active are life sciences and aerospace. Ten Northern Ireland companies, for instance, exhibited at Medica last year, five of which were on the Northern Ireland stand. Early indications suggest that 2008 will be the most successful Medica to date for participating companies," says O'Hare.

Orthodox, a medical devices company which has developed a unique 'Cocoon' product, a safety mattress for elderly patients in hospitals, clinics and care homes, was helped to find the right partner in Germany, according to Marketing Manager Terry Hickland.

"The simple and direct marketing methodology applied by the NITDC team to identify potential distributors in an extremely specialised area was impressive," he says. "It included detailed mailings in the market language and telephone follow-up

to secure meetings at both the Medica and Rehacare. As a result, we are now working with two major distributors there covering North Rhine Westphalia and a great part of Northern Germany."

As Barry McManus from EQE says, finding the right partner is often the best channel into a new market. "Our offering is highly specialised and very niche. We needed the right partner, a challenge indeed for the Düsseldorf team. They succeeded, and EQE has signed a partnership agreement with a major consultancy in Berlin."

The help provided from the NITDC in Düsseldorf extends beyond clinching the deal and pinpointing potential partners as the experience of Premier Electrics in Bellaghy illustrates.

"Primark, the clothing retailer headquartered in Dublin, is currently investing heavily in Germany. When we landed the electrical subcontract work for the Primark flagship store in Bremen, we urgently needed local partners, logistical support and help dealing with local authorities. Düsseldorf was able to provide this critical help, often on-site, when needed," says Premier's Tony Shivers.

Jonathan Hanna, Operations Manager with McCauley Trailers in Toomebridge, also found the support provided by the staff at NITDC Düsseldorf to be "invaluable", particularly in terms of local knowledge and fluency in German. "Language can be a big issue with our target group. NITDC Düsseldorf not only successfully identified a number of very good leads but accompanied me to the meetings and provided a full interpreting service. Within six weeks we had a return visit from a major dealership in Northern Germany. A contract was signed for the delivery of several trailers.

"McCauley Trailers will now feature in their customer catalogue from early 2009," he adds. McCauley Trailers designs and manufactures a range of trailers for industrial, logistics and agricultural applications.

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